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A TRUE

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Constitution, Principles and Practice

OF THE

ENGLISH

Flying Squadron.

*Illum, non Populi Fasces, non Perpura Regam
Flexit; aut Insidos agitans Discordia Civis.*

Virgil.

LONDON, Printed in the Year 1702.

A TRUE
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Constitution, Principles and Practice

OF THE
ENGLISH
LAW.

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and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

Vol. I.

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Religion, and the Sacred Person of the Lord-Anointed. The

Parliament in Ireland was carried on for the Account of Religion, and

the Protestants had their Throats Cut, and their Bodies Destroy-

ed, for the Good of their Souls. All these Men Armed them-

selves in Defence of Religion: Two, tis evident from the Li-

stence of the Times, the thing they fought for was power.

And their continual exerting, and fighting for Re-

gion, the true English Constitution, and the great Liberty of

the People, were almost lost, being always subjected to the Ar-

med Force of the prevailing Party, who made what Law they plea-

sed, and what Religion their Factions directed them to; and then

made good their Division by a powerful Arm, and the like.

And the consequence of this was, that

we had not any less, And the consequence of this was, that

we had not one to the other, they grew accustomed to the rest of

Mankind, who weigh'd Things in the Balance of Reason.

Under these Pretences, for many Years, has the Nation Groined,

engaged in a War for Private Intrest and Advantage,

they fight and Engage one another as if they contended

pro Aris & Focis; and indeed let the Thing be what

it will, the Pretence is Religion on all sides; and Men never en-

gage one another so furiously, as when they are irritated by a

Blind Zeal in Defence of Religion, which, tho' Excellent in its

own Nature, is the most Troublesome and Prejudicial when Cor-

rupted. And under the Covert of that *Sacred Name*, have been

committed the most horrid *Villanies* and *Impieties* in Christian

Kingdoms and States, which would have Blemish'd the Annals of

Roman or *Heathen* Governments. *England*, above other Lands,

has felt the Fury of these *Religious Frenzies*, which (as Pains in the

extream parts of the Body, often affect the Heart and Head) have

put the Body-Political into Convulsive Motions, and have weak-

ned

ned the Constitution by the Assaults of Acrimonious and Virulent Humours.

The *Round-Heads* from 41, to 48, pleaded *Religion* for their Attempts against the Crown. They Fought under the *Banner of Religion*, and were engaged in no less than a *Holy War*. The *Cavaliers* Fought under the *Banner of the Church*, in Defence of their *Holy Religion*, and the *Sacred Person* of the *Lords-Anointed*. The *Massacre in Ireland* was carried on upon the Account of *Religion*, and the *Protestants* had their *Throats Cut*, and their *Bodies Destroyed*, for the Good of their Souls. All these Men Armed themselves in Defence of Religion: Tho' 'tis Evident from the Histories of those Times, the thing they Fought for, was *private Interest*: And by their continual Battelling and Fighting for Religion, the true *English Constitution*, and the *Civil Liberties* of the People, were almost lost; being always subjected to the Armed Force of the prevailing Party, who made what *Law* they pleased, and what *Religion* their Fancies directed them to; and then made 'em both *Jure Divino*, by the powerful Arguments of *Pike* and *Musket*. In short, they contended so long for Religion, that we had hardly any left: And as the contending Parties grew *Formidable* one to the other, they grew *Scandalous* to the rest of Mankind, who Weigh'd Things in the *Ballance of Reason*.

Under these Pressures for many Years has the Nation Groaned, and is still struggling with the same Fate, tho' our present Circumstances require a firm Union of all our People. This want of *Unanimity* among *Englishmen*, has given our Grand Enemy, the *French King*, an opportunity of getting his Ends of us by fomenting our Intestine Broils, and keeping us unhappy in our own Divisions. He has ever had a Party in *England*, who under a Notion of *Loyalty*, have endeavoured to introduce a *French Government*; and such as have stood the most firm to the Interest of their Country, and have asserted the *Liberties of the People*, have been Branded with the odious Names of *Rebels*, and *Enemies to Monarchy*, for no other Reason, than that they would not make an actual Surrender of their Native Rights into the Hands of their Princes. In a Word, because they would not suffer their King to set up the Trade of a *Slave-maker*, and because they would not work at his Forge to Hammer out their own Chains, and subjugate themselves

themselves and Posterity to the Will and Pleasure of a Tyrant.

These are the Men that Compose the *Flying-Squadron*, into which they Lift Themselves not for *Private Interest* or *Gain*, but only for the *Service of their Dear Country*, their *Antient Laws and Liberties*, and the future Good of succeeding Ages. Tho' they are call'd the *Flying Squadron*, they are always on the side of *Truth*, and continually adhere to the *Interest of their Country* with an Heroical Stedfastness, maugre all the Difficulties that attend so generous an Enterprize, and the Temptations and Allurements of *Profits and Honours* to the contrary. Again, They are termed the *Flying-Squadron*, in that they are never of a *Party*, and yet are of all *Parties* by turns, as those *Parties* are for the *True Interest of their Country*. For he that stands for the *Liberty and Property* of the *People*, the *Rights and Prerogatives* of the *Crown*, as they are prescrib'd by *Law*, and the *Antient Constitution* of this our *Realm*, This Man is their Brother, their Near and Dear Relation; for an *Affinity* in this kind, is a greater Tye than that of *Consanguinity*. 'Tis a *Similitude of Tempers* makes an *Agreeableness in Conversation*, and the *Harmony of Opinion*, is an *Indissoluble Bond*: Such as are Link'd together by the Potent Tyes of *Principles*, Founded upon solid *Reason and Judgement*, stand, like our *Dear Country*, fast Rooted in the swelling Tempestuous Sea of *Popular Tumults*. Let the Roaring Billows of *Tyranny*, dash themselves against them, they there dissolve in Froth, and your Squadron still keeps its Order and Regular Distance: Let the Tempestuous Wind of *Modern Usurpations*, or the Thunderbolts of *Antient Slavery*, break on their Heads, they are still the same Persons; they are not to be frighted from their Posts, by Storms of *Wind, Rain, or Hail*, nor are they led into a fatal *Insecurity* by the Sunshine of *Liberty*, so as to be surpriz'd by any *Faction*. But, as the *Common Good* of their *Country* is their *Common Cause*, so are they the most Watchful of any Thing that may invade it. On Religious occasions no *Mutinies or Distractions* in this Squadron, though it is Compos'd of Men of most Perswasions, as of *Churchmen, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, &c.* The *Best Men* of all these *Parties*, are Draughted in Defence of the *Best Cause* to Compose this Squadron, where they make as even Ranks, as if they were of the same Religious Opinion. They esteem the Religion of every Man, which is not inconsistent with the Eng-

lish Constitution, to be his *Native Right* and *Property*; and as such they jointly Defend one Another's Religion. They reckon every thing *Persecution* which lays a *Restraint upon Conscience*, and think themselves in Duty bound to assert that Liberty wherein Christ has set them free. Their *Charity* is extensive to the whole Race of Mankind, they compel none into their Service, for their whole Squadron consists of *Volunteers*. They make no use of Press Gangs to Augment their Troops, nor do they employ their Sergeants to Decoy Vagrants and loose People into their Service.

As to their *Discipline*, it is extremely Regular, and yet there is no Superiority of Command amongst them; every one is willing to bear a Musket or Pike under the other in Defence of our Constitution; for they list themselves only for the *Common Good*, and not for *Private Interest*; and he that signalizes himself in a mean Post or Station, is as much esteemed as the greatest Commander.

They are very severe in Executing Justice on Deserters, I mean such as mislead Princes to the Ruin of themselves and Country, Evil Ministers, Wicked Counsellors, Treacherous, or Cowardly Officers, either by Sea or Land, Court Sycophants and Pensioners, Embezzlers and Purloiners of the Publick Treasure. In a Word, they esteem all such Men *Deserters*, that Relinquish the true Interest of their Country, and help to carry on any Design against it.

But more clearly to Illustrate the High Dignity and Transcendent Accomplishments of this Squadron of truly Venerable Heroes, who have been their Country's *Palladium* from the Infancy of the *English Constitution*, and are still the other Hope of the *British Empire*, I shall give you an Account of their Glorious Actions in former Times; and herein shall confine my self to the three last Reigns, because those Transactions are fresh in our Memories, and no Man can be impos'd upon in things that are within the Confines of his own Knowledge. No one needs to search the musty Rolls of Ancient Records, to confute what I am about to say, it may be done *Viva Voce*; if thro' Inadvertency I make a slip, or designedly endeavour to impose on the Belief of Mankind.

That King Charles the Second was Restored to his Crown after a long Banishment, and after the Nation had a long time groaned

med under the pressure of *Intestine Broils* and a *Civil War*, to the weak'ning of our *Constitution*: I say, That he was restored to his *Crown* by this *Flying Squadron*, is notoriously true. And after he was in Possession of the *Regal Dignity*, they assisted him with *wholesome Advice* and *solid Counsel*, by Observance of which, he might have enjoy'd a *lasting Reign* in *Tranquility* and *Ease*, without any *Shocks* of popular *Rage*; but some *Faction's Deserters* soon got the length of his *Foot*, and suited *Temptations* to his natural *Temper* and *Inclination*, so that he abandoning himself to *Ease* and *Luxury*, left the *Reins* of *Government* in the *Hands* of his *Brother*, who was a known *Enemy* to the *English Nation*, and resolved to introduce *Popery* and a *French Government*: The first step to which, was *Marrying* the *King* to the *Infanta* of *Portugal*, whom they knew to be *Barren*; and by this means the *King* dying *Childless*, the *Crown* would devolve to his *Brother*; this took effect, tho' it was opposed by the *Flying Squadron*.

Who finding the *Nation* likely to be *Embroiled* in case the *King* should *Dye* without *Issue* (His *Brother* being the *Heir apparent* to the *Crown*, upon serious *Consideration*, and maturely *Deliberating* upon the just *Apprehensions* of *Future Calamity*, at a *Parliament* holden at *Oxford*, they brought in a *Bill* to exclude the *Duke of York* from the *Regal Dignity* as he was a *Papist*, and an *Enemy* to the *English Constitution*. This was a happy contrivance for the *Publick Safety*, which if it had *Succeeded*, would have saved the *English Nation* many *Millions* of *Money*, and many *Thousands* of *Lives*, which have been since spent in the *Recovery* of our *Rights*. But the *Deserters* and *Minions* had so great an *Influence* upon the *King*, that they caused him to *Dissolve* that good *Parliament*, by which means the *Duke of York*, with the *English Deserters*, made the best of their way to *Popery*, by endeavouring the *Destruction* of our *Civil Rights*; and at the same time a *French Courtizan*, who was got into the *Kings Embraces*, managed the *Tack*, with the negligent *Monarch*, and drew him into *private Treaties* with the *French King*, every one of which tended to the *Destruction* of the *Protestant Religion* in *England*, and the *Introduction* of *Popery*. In order hereunto, the *French King* was supply'd with *Timber* from *England*, and had the best *Models* of *Ships* sent him over, as also the best *Shipwrights* to build them, so that by the time *Charles the Second* drop'd from the *Throne*, the *French King* had got a *Fleet* sufficient to assist *James the Second*,

Second, who succeeded *Charles* in the Throne, in the Invasion of his own Dominions.

During this Reign, the Flying Squadron was the only Obstacle to *Popery* and *Slavery*, and therefore were opposed by all the Squadrons and Troops of the Deserters, who yet durst not oppose them in the Field, but by underhand Practices misrepresented them to the King, and made him believe them to be *Enemies to Monarchy* and the *Establish'd Government* in Church and State. The Chaplains to the Squadrons of the Deserters took this Opportunity to insinuate into the too Credulous Monarch the strange and unaccountable Notions of the *Jus Divinum* of Kingship, and the Submission of the People, without Reserve, to the Will of the Prince. Our Pulpits rang of nothing but *Passive Obedience* and *Non-Resistance*; the meaning and design of which, was *Popery* and *Slavery*. The Judge Advocates of the Deserters gave their helping Hand to the Cause, and told the People that the Laws of *England* were the *Kings Laws*, and that being his own, he might do with them what he pleased; he might hang whom he pleased as Rebels, and might acquit whomsoever were indicted for Crimes against their Country: So that in truth at that time both *Law* and *Gospel* was a Dead Letter in *England*.

The Deserters having thus armed themselves with a *Tyrannick* and *Arbitrary Power*, the next thing to be done, was the taking off such of the Flying Squadron as were the greatest *Affertors* of the *Liberty* of their Country; and because they could not by continual Oppressions irritate them to a Defence of their Rights in a Hostile manner, they made a Plot for them, and suborn'd a parcel of infamous Scoundrels to swear them into a Design of murdering the King at the *Rye-House*, for which many worthy Chieftains of the Flying Squadron were Executed: This did not in the least discourage the rest of the Squadron, who still continued stedfast to the common Interest, notwithstanding they were certain of Death, if ever they were brought into Court; for a Party of Cut-throat Jury-men were raised out of the Deserters in the City of *London*, who were told they were in Duty bound to find any Man guilty the King had a mind to take off. These Men, like Death it self, spared none, but found all Guilty that came before them. Nay, when the Deserters could not procure a Person to be Hang'd upon Indictment in one County, they carried him to another, till such time as they met with

A Jury of Cut-Throats, who would do their Business, as was the Case of Stephen Colledge, the Protestant Joyner. Thus fell many of the *Flying Squadron* in this Reign, whose name is Sacred to Posterity.

One sort of Men in the *Flying Squadron*, who were Dissenters from the Church of England, were prosecuted for Nonconformity by the Deserters, who thinking the Laws already ordained in that Point, insufficient fully to accomplish their Malice on this Party, they got new Acts made for that Purpose, and the Judge Advocates gave it for Law, That all the Acts made against Popish Recusants, might be extended to Protestant Dissenters; Here begun a Furious Persecution of this part of the *Flying Squadron*; and as we had Judges, so we had Justices of the Peace made for that purpose; and you may Judge of the Designs of the Deserters in all Reigns, by the Justices they put into the Commission of the Peace; for these are the Tools by which they work, and you may truly Judge of the work by the Tools. These Men Received Information against Conventicles, as they termed the Churches of the Protestant Dissenters, and upon Conviction they Seized their Goods, and sold them at any Rate; two or three hundred Pounds worth of Goods have been sold for the 20 l. Penalty, and no return made of the Overplus to the Owners, nor so much as the 20 l. paid into the Exchequer. Forty Cows have been Seized and Sold in the Country for a 20 l. Penalty, and no return of the Overplus made to the Proprietor. The Persecution was so great, and the Seizures so many, that a large *Weekly Account* of them was Printed and Published by one Hilton, who wrote himself *His Majesties Informer*.

Not one Rank of the *Flying Squadron* escap'd Persecution, the Church-men in it were esteemed as bad as the Dissenters, and received the same Treatment from the *High-Flyers* of the Church. Nay, it was a Crime and Actionable for one of the *Flying Squadron* to speak of the Villany of the Deserters; if so, they were presently try'd by a Jury of Deserters, and Illegal Damages given them; as in the Case of Sir Tho. Pilkington (who was afterwards twice chosen Lord-Mayor of London, who was Fined 800 l. for Defaming his Majesties Powder-Monkey, at Temple-Bar, upon which President, a certain Person at this time, who is Scandalous to the greatest Degree of Infamy, has brought an Action of Defamation against a worthy Gentleman of this Squadron.

Notwithstanding all this ill Treatment, they stood firm to the Common Cause, nor were their Affections in the least Degree lessened towards his Majesty: For when that horrid Popish Plot was discovered, whereby His Majesty was to have been Murdered, the Parties concerned in that execrable Conspiracy, who were executed for the same, were all brought to Justice by Detachments from the Flying Squadron. For they are Men that do not allow Injustice in any Persons, and think themselves obliged in Conscience to preserve their greatest Enemies from Oppression. This they manifested towards this King, who in Return of their Kindness in bringing him to the Possession of the Throne of his Ancestors, let loose the Ravenous, Deserting Harpies upon them without any restraint from Regal Authority. And for their Service in bringing the Popish Plotters to Justice, he still continued to Molest and Prosecute the Squadron of *Protestant Dissenters* with more Fury than the *Papists*, who had Associated to take away his Life, and to set up his Brother in his Throne, and a *Popish French Government* in our Realm. Should we tell of the Murder of Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*, of the Assassination of Justice *Arnold*, and the Dangers and Troubles others underwent in the Prosecuting of these *Papists* for the intended Murder of their Sovereign, it would be a Black Cloud of Ingratitude, too large to spread over the Ashes of a Deceased Monarch, who gave too much Liberty to his mortal Enemies, and laid too great a Restraint and Hardships upon his best Friends. He is numbered amongst the Dead, and if he fell untimely by the Hands of *Papists*, as is conjectur'd, his fall is owing to his own flexible Temper, by being wrought upon by the Crafty Insinuations of his Enemies, and by abandoning the sincere Advice and the certain Security of those who would have preserved him in the Quiet Possession of his Throne against all the Attempts of either publick or private Deserters.

No sooner had this good natur'd Prince resign'd the Kingly State to the common Fate of Mankind, but his Brother *James* mounted the Throne, whilst it was yet warm, with the Acclamations of all the Deserters, who had indeed brought him to it by Defeating the Bill the Flying Squadron brought into the House of Commons, to exclude him from the Regal Dignity. He was Crowned with abundance of Solemnity, and as some say, was sworn to maintain the Church of *England* in his Coronation

Coronation Oath; others say not: However that matters us not, what Juggles are performed in the Wooden Chair of State, in Westminster-Abbey, e'en no more than if the Stone which lies under it be the very Stone on which Jacob laid his Head when he saw the Vision of Angels, as is superstitiously related. 'Tis not the Business of our Squadron to consider the Modes of a Coronation, but the Actions of the Crowned, how agreeable they are to our Constitution, and what proportion they bear to those Laws by which he is made King.

No Prince in the World could give greater Assurances of Fidelity to the Church of England, and of a Legal Government, than did King James at his entrance upon the Administration. The Chaplains of the Deserters every where preach'd up his Word as Sacred, and whilst he was taking away our Charters, contrary to the known Laws of the Realm, they still gave him the Title of James the Just, and could not be brought to have any Apprehensions of his Injustice, till such time as he touch'd their own Coppy hold, as shall be shown hereafter; but all his Protestations and Declarations of Legal Government weigh'd nothing with the Flying Squadron, who were well assured of his Bigotry to the Roman Religion, and of his Resolute Design to Introduce Popery into these Kingdoms. Therefore they kept the stricter watch, and sent out Parties to observe the Motions of the Enemies of our Country.

At this time a very ill Accident happened to the Flying Squadron; King James, by the Advice of Popish and Arbitrary Councillors, was wrought upon to execute a Dispensing Power, by suspension of the Laws against Dissenters from the Church of England; the Design of which was to bring Papists into Offices, tho' he declared he did it out of Principle, being convinc'd in his Judgment, That Liberty of Conscience was according to Scripture, and that Restraint upon Conscience was repugnant to the Principles of the Christian Religion. This very thing caus'd a Defection in the Flying Squadron; great numbers of such as had formerly suffered Persecution to Imprisonment and loss of Goods, went over to the Squadron of Deserters: These were such of our Squadron whose Zeal was not according to Knowledge, and whose Eyes were dazzled with the Sun-shine of Liberty, having so long lain under the Black Clouds of Religious Thralldome; the rest of the Flying Squadron, who yet stood their Ground,

Ground, movn'd indeed at the Fatal Delinquency of their Brethren at a time when they most needed their Assistance, but they found them gone too far to be brought back to their Reason, and their own Troops.

For now they made yet a farther step with the Deserters; King James pretended to suspend the Penal Laws against *Protestant Dissenters* only till such time as he could get an Act passed for the Repealing of them. In order to which, he attempted the regulating of Corporations; that is, he sent Commissioners to Hector the Free-Burgesses, with a compliance with his Desires at the next Election; and such as would not comply, these Commissioners had Authority to set them by, and put others in their Room, who would fulfil the Will of the King; and if they found a whole Corporation obstinate, then were they to bring a *Quo Warranto* against their Charter, to disfranchise them for ever. Nothing could be more Diametrically opposite to the Laws of the Land, than was this Action; and yet the Deserters from the Flying Squadron Listed themselves in this Infamous Band of Banditti, who were going to cut the Throat of our *Liberties*: And this they did to get a *Liberty of Conscience* established by Law, which would have been the Ruine of the *Protestant Religion*, and the Destruction of our *Civil Rights*.

King James perceiving that the Chaplains of the Flying Squadron stood most in his way to *Popery*, he sought always to pick a Hole in their Coat, and now they laid hold on this Opportunity to do it. He ordered the Declaration to be put forth for *Liberty of Conscience* to be read in all Parish Churches, and that the Diocesans should charge the Inferiour Clergy to the performance hereof; but several of the Bishops considering the Nature of this Declaration, that it owned a *Dispensing Power* in the King, that the intent of it was the Ruine of the Church of England, and that the Effect of it would be *Popery* and *Slavery* in this Kingdom, they very bravely came over and joined the Flying Squadron in defence of their own and the Peoples Rights, and openly Declared, That Declaration was contrary to Law: And notwithstanding they behaved themselves with all Modesty and due Respect towards His Majesty, and gave him all imaginable Assurance of their good Disposition and Lenity towards *Protestant Dissenters* in Parliament and Convocation, the only proper Places to consider of that Affair; Yet the King

King told them his Will should be obey'd, and calling them the *Trumpeters of Rebellion*, sent seven of our Bishops to the Tower, for no other Reason than that they would not turn *Papists*.

As the Defection aforesaid of the Dissenters was a weak'ning to our Squadron, so this Additional Force was a wonderful strengthening of it: For these Bishops being sent to the Tower, gain'd us a very great Party; they came in by whole Troops, and Regiments, some bearing the *Standards of the Church*, and others the *Ensigns of the State*, and came to be Listed faster than we could get Men to enter their Names; never was our Squadron more Numerous and Unanimous: Now we had no Talk of *High-Church* or *Low-Church*, *Presbyterians* or *Anabaptists*, *Quakers* or *Independants*; we were all *Papists* or *Protestants*, for *Liberty* or *Slavery*, for a *French Government*, or the *English Constitution*; and such we ought to have remained to this very Day.

Notwithstanding King James saw himself Deserted by the best Men of all Parties, and Abandoned to the Black-Guard of *Popish Priests*, and *Treacherous Deserters*, yet he went on with such Fury, as if he thought himself secure in the Support of this Tatterdemallion Crew. The Headstrong Humour of this Prince, was no small Advantage to our Squadron, for the farther he went from the *English Constitution*, the nearer we came to it; for by this means our Squadron met with daily Reinforcements, and we were all resolved to lose our Lives, before we would part with our Liberties. The *Popish Priests* who came over to supplant the Chaplains of our Squadron, were uneasy till they had gotten possession of their Benefices, and so they Rode Whip and Spur. We had Titular Bishops and Clergymen for all the Bishopricks and Benefices in *England*, who thought it a hardship upon them to be kept one day out of possession. For why should a Stubborn Heretical Clergy deny what his Holiness and King James had appointed? This made still for our Interest; for in a short Time they began to take possession, by putting *Magdalen-Colledge* in *Oxford* into the Hands of *Popish Fellows*, and Governours; so that the *Protestant Fellows* who were extruded, composed a Troop, and came over as Chaplains into our Squadron.

But to make sure of the Game, King James and the Deserters thought fit to Regulate the Army, and we at the same time were as diligent in bringing them over to the true Interest of their Country, which King James undesignedly accomplish'd for us. The Deserters

told him, That he could not Rely upon the *Protestants* in that Army in the Prosecution of their Designs; and therefore advised him to bring over some Regiments of *Irish Papists* to incorporate with them; which being Arrived, the *English* would not admit of them, and so throwing up their Commissions, came and Listed themselves in our Squadron, so that we were Reinforced by Detachments, both *Ecclasiastical, Civil and Military*.

The *English* Nation was very happy at that time in that the Flying Squadron encreased in Numbers, as the Deserters hastened to our Destruction; for the more Ground they seemingly got, the more were we really strengthened; and in good truth the nearer they got to *Popery*, the farther were they from accomplishing their Ends. It has hitherto been found true in the *English* Nation, that the nearer their Kings have approach'd to *Arbitrary Power* and *Despotick Government*, the nearer have they been to their End of Governing; for the Trumpets of *Arbitrary Power*, like *Death Watches*, are the Tokens of the fall of Princes. The Distemper of the State is then come to a *Crisis*, and we can then judge of its *Death or Recovery*.

At this time King *James* stood on Tiptoe to take a leap from his Kingdoms; for no rational Man could believe he would hold it long, who had raised himself, on the Burdens he had laid on his People, so high that his Head was grown Giddy, his Government became top heavy, and nodded under the Pressure of its own Weight. And the Oppressions of the People were so great, that it was high time for them to concert of Methods for their own Safety and the common good of the Realm. For finding the Duty they paid their Sovereign, their Faithful Counsel, and their Desire of Peace, signify'd nothing, they must have recourse to the last last Resort of *Free-men* under *Oppression*, and come to the Recovery of their *Rights* by Force of Arms.

The Chiefs of the Flying Squadron in taking these things into consideration, met with many Difficulties; they saw their King in the Hands of *Papists* and *Deserters* obstinately bent to his own Ruin, without hopes of reclaiming him; they saw their *Civil Liberties* invaded, their *Antient Constitution* demolishing, and their holy Religion gasping for Life; at the same time they found themselves *Disarmed* and *Undisciplined*, and could not entirely confide on the fidelity of the standing Army:

All

All the Fortresses and strong Holds in the Kingdom were in the Hands of *Papists* or *Deserters*, and what was worst of all, the *French* King had an Army ready to Land in *England* in Case the Flying Squadron should attempt to rescue themselves by force of Arms: Upon these Considerations they concluded to draw up a Memorial to the Prince *Orange*, who had married the Eldest Daughter of King *James*, and who was a very Vertuous Princess and a good Protestant, as also the next in Succession to the Crown of *England*; in this Memorial they set forth the Dangers they were exposed to by the *Male-Administration* of their King under the Conduct of *Papists* and *Deserters*, that their Liberties were in a manner lost, and that their antient Constitution must fall, if not speedily supported by some extraordinary Assistance, and recommending the Premises to their Highnesses serious Consideration, they desired his Highness to come over with such a Number of Forces as he thought sufficient to assist them in the Recovery of their Rights.

This was indeed a desperate Conclusion, and you'll say the Liberties of *English-men* were in the greatest danger when they were forc'd to call an Army of Foreigners to put them in possession of those Rights they were born to: Had they not been thoroughly satisfy'd of the good Inclination of the Prince of *Orange*, of his sincere affection to the *Protestant Interest*, and his true Zeal for the Liberties of *England*, the Remedy might have proved as bad as the Disease: A Nation that puts it self, it's Laws and Liberties into the Hands of a Foreign Power, resigns a Trust which they shall never again get into their own hands, if it be for the Interest of the Trustee to keep it. For my part, I tremble at the very thoughts of that Expedient; and yet it was such a one that we could not be without; we were brought, as we say, to our last prayers, and we had but one way by which we could be delivered, and blessed be God we succeeded so well in it. But I hope this will be a Caution to us, not to suffer a parcel of treacherous *Deserters* to bring us again into the like Circumstances, so as to Expose our Liberties to such apparent Dangers.

The Prince and Princess of *Orange* having considered the Deploable Condition of *England*, and how highly necessary it was for them to keep us in possession of our Liberties; The Prince
resolved

resolved to come for *England* to joyn the Flying Squadron. The *Dutch*, who very well knew that if *England* (which is the Ballance of *Europe*) were once broken, that the States of the United Provinces would soon be off the Hinges, and therefore they lent the Prince of *Orange* a sufficient number of Ships to Transport his Forces. During the time of the Prince of *Oranges* Preparations, the Flying Squadron still encreased; and King *James* finding himself abandoned, began seemingly to come to a Temper, by Restoring to Corporations their Ravished Charters, and by fair promises for the future: But the Flying Squadron could not be perswaded to take the Word of one who had so often broke it, and therefore they stood upon their Guard, in the daily expectation of the Landing of the Prince of *Oranges* Army; which after many Disappointments, Sail'd from *Holland*, and Landed at *Torbay* in the West of *England*.

This was a bitter Pill to King *James* and his Deserters, and a Reviving Cordial to the Flying Squadron, who as soon as ever they heard of the Prince of *Oranges* Landing, went over to him by Troops and Regiments, as they got opportunity. My Lord *Cornbury* went over with a whole Regiment at once, as did many others by Troops at several times from the Army of the Deserters, where they had been as it were kept Prisoners till that time, not daring before to declare themselves; at which time also his Royal Highness Prince *George* of *Denmark*, came over and took his Post in the Flying Squadron, whilst his Wife the Princess *Ann*, now our Gracious Queen (whom God keep from all the evil Counsels of Deserters, and such as misled her Father) was secured by a Detachment of the Flying Squadron, under the Command of the right Reverend Father in God the Lord Bishop of *London*, who like a good Champion of the Church, and the Cause of Liberty, preserv'd Her Royal Highness that time from the Designs of the Deserters against Her; by which means Her Majesty is now become the Protestant Head of a Protestant Church, and a Legal Queen, according to our Constitution; when otherwise we had now been groaning under the Burden of Popery and Slavery.

Before the Prince of *Orange* could reach *London*, the Army of the Deserters was broken, and King *James* coming to Town, was perswaded to absent himself, and to retire to *France*, which he did, and left the Court Empty, and the Throne Vacant, at which time the Prince not being come to Town, the Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*,

lury, and several Lords, and Chieftains of the Flying Squadron; rectified matters till his Highnesses Arrival, by Assembling at the Guild-Hall of the City of London, where they seized on the chief Magazine of the Kingdom, the Tower of London; and displacing the Governour King James had appointed, they put the Care of that Important Place into the Hands of the Lord Lucas; a Worthy and Noble Member of the Flying Squadron.

They managed Affairs in the City with a wonderful Prudence till such time as the Prince came to the Royal Palace of St. James's where he received the Complements of the Squadron in general, and such of the Flying Squadron as were of the House of Lords, and such who had been Members in the last Parliament, Assembled themselves at Westminster; where they agreed to Address His Royal Highness to take upon him the Government both Civil and Military, and to Issue out his circular Letters for a Convention or English Parliament; all which His Highness performed at their Request.

Never was a more speedy Deliverance from such a Desperate Thralldom, and never was the English Flying Squadron of such a mighty Bulk as at that time, nor never more Unanimous. There was no Distinguishing Character made use of in the whole Kingdom, till the Meeting of the Convention; when some Persons Deserted from the Squadron, upon pretences of Religion and Loyalty, and these were Headed by those Bishops who voluntarily joynd our Squadron in Defence of the English Liberties, and of the Church of England. The Difference arose about Voting the Throne Vacant, upon the Flight of King James: Somers, Arch-Bishop of Canterbury was the chief of this Faction, who was for a Regency, and not to proceed so hastily to vote the Throne Vacant; now by this Regency, I understand they were minded to put the Kingly Office into Commission, and the Arch-Bishop having play'd Rex at Guild-Hall, in appointing an Officer for the Tower of London, and things of that Nature, he found he had a good hand at managing the Kingly Office; and therefore he was to have been one of the Commissioners in whom the Executive Power of the Law, that is the Kingly Office, was to have been vested: Now these People were for a Regency, only to gain Time to make Terms with King James, in order to restore him to his Dominions; for it seems they never joynd the Flying Squadron, or the Prince of Orange, for any other purpose than to Rescue their Livings out of the

Hands of Papists, for King James was King *Jure Divino*, notwithstanding all his Aberrations from Justice, and he might be a Papist still, provided he did not meddle with the Church.

The other part of the Flying Squadron were positive in their Demands of Justice, and resolute to proceed in Voting the Throne Vacant; for they concluded the Throne, was Vacant, because there was no Body in it: This was a Position, to be proved by Visible Demonstration, and they would not be said to Act contrary to natural Reason, and so the Throne was Declared Vacant; for now our Squadron far out-number'd the Deserters. The Squadron being resolved to make the Prince and Princess of *Orange*, King and Queen of *England*, proceeded farther in condemning the Actions of King James; but the Arch-Bishop and his Gang, with the rest of the Deserters, would not admit of one Hard Word in this proceeding, that is, *Forfeiture*; for they would not allow King James to have Forfeited his Crown, and so would not have that the reason of making the Prince and Princess of *Orange* King and Queen, and therefore they would have the Word Abdicated put in the Room of Forfeited: This occasioned some Debate, but the Arch-Bishop being an Old Peevish Man, and by Nature and Office, a Peevish Stubborn Creature, they agreed to the Word Abdicated, tho' some have thought it a hardship for King James to be turned out of his Dominions, only for giving a Visit to his Neighbour. At this rate I'll assure you Princes had need have a Care how they go abroad: But the Arch-Bishop being what we call High-Church, could not endure the Notion of a Kings Forfeiting, tho' it was the same thing to his Master King James, since the Bishops Abdication as effectually un-king'd him, as the Forfeiture could have done. If I were Condemn'd to Dye in a String, I should not much matter whether the Judge pass'd Sentence upon me to be Hang'd, Suspended, or Tuck'd up; this would be no Abatement of the Punishment. But the Prince and Princess of *Orange* were at length made King and Queen upon the Arch-Bishops own Terms, only to please him and the rest of the *Deserters*, to keep them Quiet, and make the Minds of that Party easie.

Indeed it would have been the highest Ingratitude in the *English* Nation not to have confer'd the Kingly Office on one who had been the happy Instrument in the hand of Providence in the Delivery of these Nations from Popery and Slavery, especially since he was so fitly qualified for that Station. Thus the most glorious

of Monarchs that ever Sway'd the *English* Scepter, arrived at the Throne, by the Consent and Approbation of all the Free People of *England*, as represented in Parliament, his own Personal Merit and Consummate Vertue recommending him to their Choice. Notwithstanding all which, there was never such a Rent made in the Flying Squadron as in the Reign of this good King. Men are never better discovered than in Revolutions, and under the various Changes and Alterations of Fortune; many are vertuous because they have no Temptation to the contrary, or are so weakned by Nature, that they are not able to be wicked; many are Honest for want of an opportunity of being Knaves, and do vehemently rail at the Evil Practice of others, because they are not in a Condition to do the like themselves; such Men as these may be Listed in the Flying Squadron, but always discarded as Deserters, as soon as they are Discovered; for the Constitution of this Squadron is such, that it takes in honest Men of all Parties, but no Party can impose a notorious Knave upon them; such may indeed by false Disguises and Dissembling of Vertue be admitted, but they are soon Discovered and Rejected.

No sooner had King *William* ascended the Throne but the Flying Squadron lost some Troops of two Parties which composed it, viz. Of such who had repented of their evil ways; and joyn'd the Squadron to assist in the Revolution; those could not be denyed admittance into the Squadron, who are Constituted on a Foundation of Justice, which never denys admittance to a repenting Sinner; no sooner were these Men admitted into Offices, but like Dogs they returned to their Vomit, and endeavoured to embroil the Nation, and to embarrass the Affairs of that Monarch who had mercifully past by their Iniquities, and had given them immerited Honours and Offices; these opposed the *Recognition Bill*, and every thing that tended to the *Establishment* of the King on his Throne, and the common good of the Realm: By reason of their high Stations they gave Intelligence to the Common Enemy of the Posture of their Affairs, and by betraying all the good Designs of the King, they prolong'd the War, till the People grew weary of Taxes; in a word, they gave infallible proofs of their *Perfidy*, and that they came into our Squadron only to enable themselves to do more mischief to the Publick. By which they have convinc'd Mankind that they ought not for the future to be trusted under any Government.

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The second sort which at this Juncture left the Squadron, were such as were honest, and of whom we had the least suspicion; they were never known to have done any ill thing, & the whole Squadron rejoyc'd at their Preferments; but we soon found 'em as bad or worse than the others, who did but the same thing they had done before, and who had imposed on the Squadron only in the Reality of their Repentance. But these Men turning Renegadoes, made the whole Squadron stare and stand amazed at their Actions, and begin to question whether there was Vertue enough in one single Person to secure himself from the force of Temptation. The good King knew very well that many honest Gentlemen had been ruin'd in asserting the *Liberties of England*, and Protestant Religion, who were now Voluntiers in the Flying Squadron at their own Expences; he considered how Instrumental they had been in the Revolution, that he owed his Crown to these very Men who had made a stand for many years against *Papery* and *Slavery*, till such time as he came over with a Force sufficient to settle the Nation on its antient Basis of Government: As also that these Men deserved Rewards suitable to their Eminent Services.

In order to which he preferred the Chiefs of their Party, some into the *State*, some into the *Treasury*, some into the *Excise*, some into the *Customes*, some into the *Vittualling*, &c. That they might have an Opportunity of rewarding with Offices these brave Gentlemen according to their Qualifications for the same; no sooner were these Men possess'd of Eminent Stations but they proved Renegadoes, and instead of rewarding the Gentlemen of the Squadron, they Sold the Places allotted them by the King to the most Infamous of the Deserters, who had been the Enemies of *England*, and who had opposed the Revolution; no Men ever ran into publick *Cheats* and *Frauds* as did these sort of Deserters, they liv'd on the fat of the Land, and wallowed in Riches without any commiseration of the starving Condition of those Gentlemen by whose *Valour* and *Address* they became Masters of such high Posts; for these Men were such as never ventured their Lives in the Service of their Country, but having kept their Estates they made a Figure at the Court upon the Revolution, which the others could not do, and telling the King of Services which they never perform'd, they created in him a belief of their real worth; when God knows they were the most undeserving Wretches of the whole Squadron, and were taken in only to make a show of Numbers,

for

for we never depended on their Courage, tho' we were mistaken in their Sincerity to the Cause.

And thus it too often happens in Government, Persons who have a stock of consummate Impudence tho' never so Ignorant, shall by their Assurance and Sycophantry work themselves into Favour at Courts, and get that from a Prince, which Men of true Merit and Judgment have not enough Courage to ask for: Wit and Understanding are generally attended with a pernicious Modesty, which exposes the best Endowments to Want and Poverty; and Men of parts are excluded from Courts, because, if they're honest, they'll prove a Dead Weight to Designing Favourites; and, if they're Knaves, they get too large a share of the publick Plunder to themselves; at least they are there as a Beauty among so many ordinary Dames, the Subjects of the Envy of the whole Company; certainly never such a parcel of insignificant Trifles made a part of Government, as did the Deserters in the late Reign: Had you taken away the Pride and Ignorance, you had destroyed the very Man. The Effects of their *Policy* sufficiently discovered what sort of States-men they were, and their Kindness to their Brethren, who, by the Hazard of their Lives brought them to places of Honour and Profit, was a manifest proof of their Honesty. Never any King had greater occasion for Men of Knowledge and Honesty than had our Glorious *William*, because none had greater Enemies at Home or Abroad than himself: *Mezeray* calls the Reign of *Henry* the Third of *France* the Reign of Favourites: I am sure we may justly call the Reign of *William* the Third of *England*, the Reign of Fools; Tho' that King was Inferiour to none of his Predecessors Kings and Queens of this Realm, in Wisdom, Knowledge, and Honesty; yet never any King made such a Fatal Choice of Favourites and Officers as did this Monarch: Those Impudent Deserters from the Flying-Squadron, who made a Monopoly of all the Offices, were such as were unknown to the King before he came to *England*; for they were such as never appear'd in any Service of their Country, which was eminently dangerous; they were not forc'd to fly their Native Country, and become Refugees in Foreign parts, for the Security of their Lives: But they made a great noise of their own Qualifications, like Vessels, which sound loudest when there is least in them.

Had these Impious Deserters had any true Love for their Prince, or the good of their Country, they would not have suffered the

to have undergone the just imputation of Ingratitude, by disregarding his best Friends, nor the other to be impoverished by mercenary Wretches, who crept into Offices and Government, as Mice do into Cheese, only to devour it. What a monstrous Spectacle was it to see that Worthless Beast *Fleet Shepherd*, who never did a Pennyworth of Service to his Country, rewarded for his Impiety and Atheism with a Power of Selling most of the Places at *White-Hall*, which he sold to Deserters, in prejudice of the Honest Gentlemen of the Squadron, who had a Right to them, by Vertue of their Losses in the common Cause. Indeed this was a Scene of Cruelty which could not have been expected to be seen in the Reign of a Prince who was brought to the Throne by the Ruine of the best Men in *England*. What can be more Cruel and Inhumane, than to give the Childrens Bread to Dogs, and to Bastardize the Legitimate Offspring of our Country? All these things are owing to the infamous Deserters of our Squadron.

For the King being a Stranger, and Men of true Merit being unknown to his Majesty, those who had the possession of his Ear should have told him of the Suffering part of the Squadron, of their Vertues and steady Affection to their Country, but their Business was to make their own Fortunes, and that they did with a Wit-ness abominably lopping the Trees of our Funds to make Stakes for their own Hedge, some procured themselves immerited Honours but all of 'em got vast Estates, at such a Rate that perhaps no Age nor History can parallel; the most Inferiour Officer in the Kingdom in a few years could purchase; and had the Reign of these Consumers of the publick Treasure lasted but 20 years longer, the whole Lands of the Kingdom would have been but as one Park to the Court, this you may think a *Hyperbole*; but if an Officer of 80 *l. per Ann.* Salary, in 8 years time can make a purchase of 40 Thousand pound; *Pro rato*, there is not Land enough in this Kingdom for the Officers thereof to purchase.

This was the Practice of these Men during the War in the late Reign; and when the Peace was concluded the next thing they had to do was to secure themselves in the Possession of what they had Piratically gotten from the Publick; this was to be done by a standing Army, for what is obtain'd by *Fraud* must be maintain'd by *Force*. And herein these Deserters shew'd themselves the most abject and vile Apostates, for no Men clamour'd more against standing Armies than themselves in former Reigns, and suspected eve-

ty King to have a Design upon his Country that augmented his Troops: As this was a sign of their having entirely quitted their former Principles, so was it a Token of the highest Disingenuity in railing at that in others which they allowed as Lawful in themselves, and we must needs say that these Men had ran a desperate length, when the Liberties of all the People of *England* were to be made precarious by a standing Army, only to keep themselves in possession of what they had ravished from the Publick.

The Flying Squadron thought it high time now to call these publick Cheats into Question by a Legal Proceeding against them in the high Court of Parliament; for the Parliament having raised Taxes on the People ought, to take care how the money thus raised had been expended. No sooner had they entred upon this just and necessary work, but the whole Troops of the Deserters drew up in Battalia against the Parliament; by the useful methods of Chequer-Bills, Borrowing Clauses and Tallies, they had link'd abundance of the City Misers to themselves in the common chain of Profit, so that these clamor'd out of Interest against the Parliament, and never sent a Bill of parcels into the Country without a parcel of Faction against the Flying Squadron; whoever spake against the Cheats, or Justify'd the Impeachments of the Commons were publickly branded as Enemies to the King and Government; for they endeavour'd to make the Crowd believe that whatever was done against themselves, was mean't against the King; as if His Majesty could not subsist on his Throne, without their Assistance, & as if his Government could be supported no other ways than by Court Rapparees and Deserters. Their Case being desperate, they had recourse to Methods altogether Destructive to our Constitution, and raised the very Mob against the Parliament in Scandalous and Insolent Seditions, yet the Flying Squadron still stood their Ground, tho' that good Parliament was dissolved by the Evil Counsel of the Deserters.

Their last shift was to get a Parliament for their turn, and in order hereunto they Villify'd and Aspers'd the best Members of the Squadron throughout the Kingdom to keep them from being Elect-ed, they stigmatiz'd all the brave Leaders of the Squadron by Name in a Black-List, tho' not half so black as their own vile Actions; for in this List were inserted the Names of Gentlemen, who are an Ornament to the Age they live in, and are the only hopes of our future happiness, for by their Courage and Conduct have we hitherto been kept in the possession of our Native Freedoms, and upon them do we depend for our future Safety.

Thus have I given you a succinct Account of the Principles,
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Constitution and Practices of the *English Flying Squadron*; as well as of their Sufferings. This is a Squadron which never yet did suffer a total Defeat, tho' it hath been often overpowered and routed like Vertue (whose Standard it bears, and under whose Banner it fights) it shines brightest in the Clouds of Affliction and Distress. Like the *Phoenix*, it arises out of its own Ashes; and the *Hydra* is the exact Emblem of this Squadron; it grows as Camomile does, by depression; for Generous Free-born Spirits are most active when they are assaulted with the greatest Violence. The Judgment of a Mariner is discovered in the dangers of a Storm, as the Courage and Conduct of our Squadron has been in times of the greatest difficulty; and it has been observed that when the Fate of *England* has been in its Wane, that then the *English Squadron* had the greatest supplies of unexpected succours; Oppression is the Enemy which this Squadron does engage, and that being the common Enemy of Mankind, is universally hated. *Liberty* and *Property* are the Cause for which our Squadron does engage, and they being the Darlings of Free-men, we can never want a sufficient Force, since what we contend for, is the just right of every Man.

Let no Man therefore despise and condemn our Squadron, because it seldom has been the Life-Guard of Princes, and because its Commanders have seldom or never been employ'd in Eminent Posts in the Government; they are not the less powerful because they have not the Marks of Royal Favour, they never list themselves on the Account of Profit and Preferments; nor do they expect any other Reward than that of their own Vertuous Actions; and Vertue is a sufficient Reward in its self. We are in great hopes that we shall have no more Deserters from our Squadron, but that all will Vote and Act in this Reign as they did in the last, nor are we so void of Compassion as not to grant a general Indemnity, to such Deserters as Voted and Acted against their Country in the last Reign, provided they will Return to their Colours, and Act as good Patriots, becoming the Honourable Society of the *Flying Squadron*.

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